



PHOENIX 1997

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1997

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PHOENIX 1997

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Insights On



Jennifer, Meghan Gilroy, SAS '97

Womanhood

Woman Are You

The earth stood still the night you were created
All the wonders of the world halted their natural course
Of life and gazed on you
Your form, so new, unlike any other
Your cry gave way to shivers and your look produced sighs
The mastery of your form showed a great artist's work
You are regal
You are beautiful
You are a woman

Cyndia Romulus, SON '97

Who's the Smoothest Sista On the Planet?

Who's the smoothest sista on the planet
Break'em off lovely but they can't stand it
Without a doubt that's a blessing which we all call your presence
In your spare time you like to read Essence
You could curse a person out and make it sound good
You perfected the phrase, "yeah I wish you would"
Most dangerous thing known to mankind
Intelligent Black Woman that's about to shine
Hair permed out with the phat wrap
Or maybe finger waves with the weave in the back
Better yet Goddess braids planted in the top
Queen Cleopatra never did so you won't stop
Steady making moves trying to get yours
You gliding on air while others scrape the floors
Walking mad hard or with a slight switch
Skin butter, caramel, or coffee rich
Ya got ya face made up by fashion fair
Won't even leave the house unless ya did ya hair
Real concerned about the clothes ya wear
Today a mink coat Tomorrow rock a Bear
Whether rocking Donna Karan or Karl Kani

Ya always in style so you know ya fly
Ya love kids to death and that ya try to show
But when they act up ya gotta let em know
Same goes for your man Yeah we know
If he acts up ya gotta let him go
But if he keep it true ain't nothin' you won't do
To keep that man happy comin' back to you
So now you know that's all there is to it
And ain't a damn thing to it y'all but to do it
I guess you've figured it out that we all are
Because we all got the attitude of superstars
So lemme
Hear you say yes I am dammit
Next time I ask who's the smoothest sista on the planet

Natalie "Renaissance" Thomas, SAS '00

BBBW

Lies, Lies, and more Lies!

Sexuality is a caramel colored hoochie mama.

An abstruse nose ring interrupts her face.

As her platform shoes elevate her ghetto status.

But he swears he loves his Big Black Beautiful Women.

Only when he can get some.

Like Marvin; "It makes me wanna holler, throw up both my hands."

Yes he loves his Big Black Beautiful Women

But he adores his caramel hoochie mama.

Renee D. Blackwell, SAS Alumnae, Class of '94

Animales

Gawking like you've never seen a woman:
bugged-out eyes, checking me out.
Seems like you've been locked in a cage all your life,
and they've finally let you out.
Man, put your panting tongue back in your mouth,
and wipe the drool off your face!

"Hey baby! You look good!"

I don't need your reassurance on my appearance.
I know I look good, but it's not for you!

"You Mami! I wanna talk to you!"

Well I don't want to talk to you!
Who knew animals could hold a conversation.

"Oye! Come over here linda!"

Que sigue caminando,
'cause I ain't stopping for nobody!

Alba N. Negron, SAS '98

A Child's Dilemma

When I was young, on a staircase,
someone, a grown-up, asked what I had wished for
in that moment of closing my eyes before
the birthday cake.

I knew the sacred magic of candles,
and saw others use them often
and was afraid of being too greedy by telling
or being difficult by being "Pious".
I never told.

And in keeping that silence between
myself and the magic,
I do not remember what I wished for.
Or being upset or happy at whatever it was that I got.
I only remember now.
And the day when I realized wishes
must be told to be kept alive.

Tammy Rose, SAS '97



Clinging to Youth, Nicole Totans, SAS '99

Giving Birth To My First Born

It was early in the morning, the time was five
The gushing of water began
On my sheets, my clothes and feet: it ran

What a terrible thing I've done, I thought I tried
to stop it but all for naught—My sixteen year old body
cringed from a kick and a butt
Must I call my mother? I think I should

Mother said: Do not worry, don't be afraid
This is part of the journey you have to pass
My child, this dilemma will not forever last

Two days passed before the date
For glorious feelings for me and my mate
As I was working on a specific chore
The pain hit hard so I held on to my bedroom door

It was nature's time to show, I had to know
So he grabbed my bag and off we go
The ride was rough, but I had to be tough
I wiggled and screamed, it was enough

The staff were happy, nice and kind
They said in a short while, I'll have my peace of mind
They encouraged me to push but I pulled
I couldn't concentrate, with misery and agony I was full

Finally, the courage came as he stood by my side
for his kind words and encouragement I did abide
I pushed with my might, the pain in spite
And behold my darkness came to light
When the beauty of our love came into sight!

Beverly Lee, SNR Employee

**Words, Phrases and Sounds that Women
are Accustomed to While Walking in Their
Neighborhoods...or...113th Street
(To Leon...)**

Hey Mama!

Hey Luv!

Yah Nice!

Pretty Baby!

Where are you goin' in such a hurry? Can I come?

Iahd 'av mercy mon, yuh sweet!

Damn!

Whistle! Whistle!

Whas yuh name?

Whas yuh number?

Can I call yuh sometime?

Yuh gotta man?

Heavens mercy!

'Scuse Me!

Faat an' sexxy!

Whah yuh say gal?

Honk! Honk!

Luvliness!

Gal yuh good!

Uh, Uh, Uh!

Ai Mommi!

Walking down the street watching ladies...

Walking down the street watching

Put on a head wrap

Good Morning

Good Afternoon

Good Evening

My Sistah!

Paula Pryce, Graduate '97



Untitled, Meghan Gilroy, SAS '97

The Heart of a Woman

Do you ever really know
The heart of a woman
Complex as it is
Complex it shall remain
Explore the domain
Get caught in the rain
Of the joy and the pain
No two are the same
The heart
Of a woman
Do you ever really know
The heart of a woman
Or do you find yourself caught up in her world
of unexplained answers and incomplete questions
Do you ever really know
The heart of a woman
Once entered
Can you maneuver yourself through her maze
Which is filled with twists and turns of love and hate
Highs and lows
Stops and go's
Cynicism Optimism
Pessimism Narcissism
Orgasm
Ahhhh
Do you ever really know
The heart of a woman
With its capacity
For compassion
And an entity
For empathy
And ability
To battle
Holding in one hand a gun
And in the other a rattle
Do you
Ever really know
The heart of a woman
The
Heart
Of a Woman

Natalie "Renaissance" Thomas, SAS '00

Happy Birthday From Mom

Today you are nineteen years old
I thought of purchasing a card from the store
but then I realized that sharing with you words from my
soul would benefit both of us much more

It gives me joy to watch and to see- what a
wonderful young lady you have grown up to be
As I look back on your childhood-many of your ways
I misunderstood
I was afraid that our relationship would never be tight
-But Child, I prayed to God with all my might
that before you embark on life on your own
we would rebuild broken bridges and all patches would
be sewn

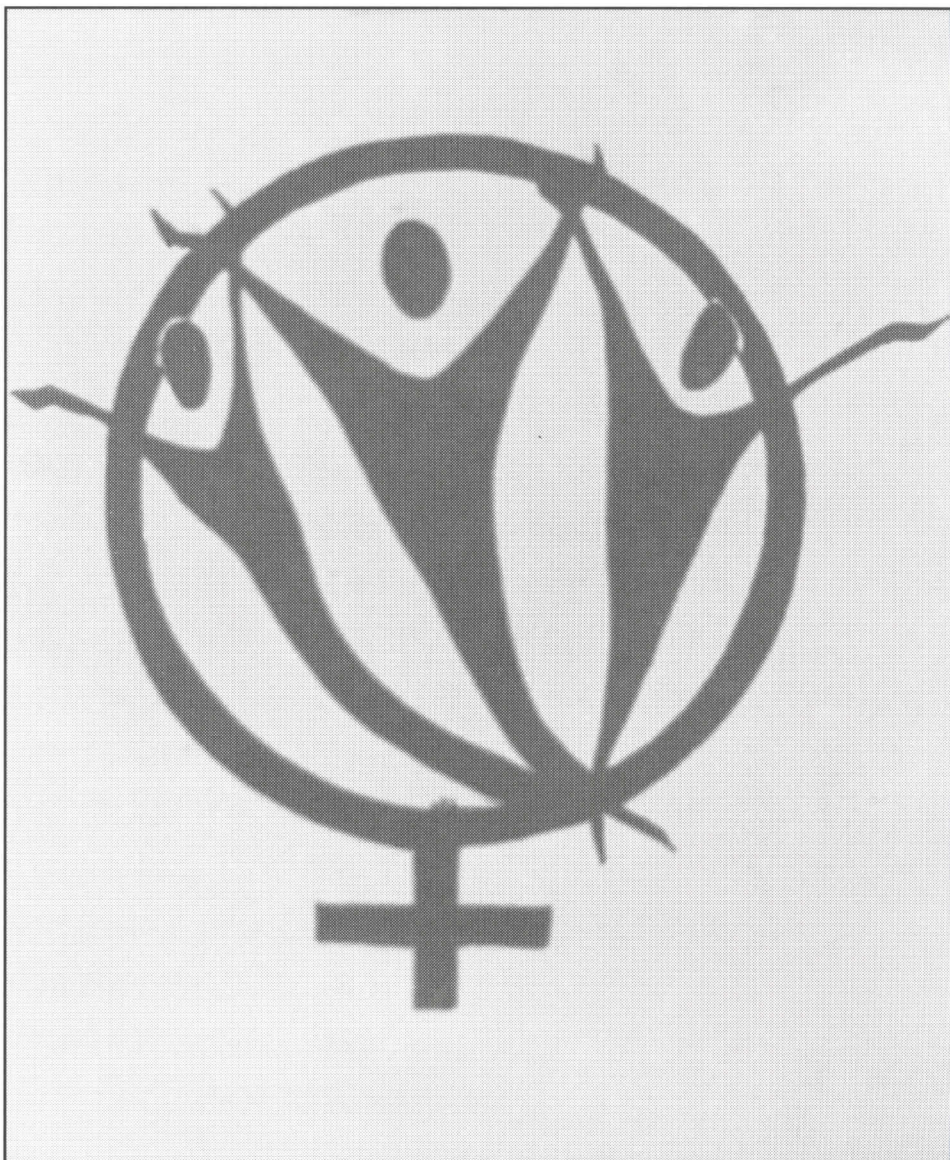
Today I can honestly say that you're a blessing to me
Given by God for all to see
You've shown that with God on your side you'll win
I see how your battles all end in a tailspin

Continue my child in the path you walk-
be an example-your brother and sister will talk
I want you to know my daughter dear
The pain of your struggles I do share
But only through your pain-
you can experience life and wisdom you'll gain

Hold your head up high and pray
Your victory will come one special day
Remember God is always by your side
and he carries you through each bumpy ride

Beverly Lee, SNR Employee

Spirituality *And*



Untitled, Lyvett Velazquez, SAS '98

Consciousness

AN HONEST MAN

I KNEW AN HONEST MAN ONE DAY
I CAME UPON HIM GENTLY
AS SILENTLY HE LAY
HE WEPT BESIDE A BARREN FIELD
(WHERE NO CHILDREN CREPT TO PLAY)
AND LOOKED AT ME WITH SULLEN EYES
(IN WONDER AND DISMAY)
I SMILED AT HIS BEWILDERMENT
(FOR WHAT WAS I TO SAY I HAD NEVER KNOWN AS HONEST
MAN WITH NO SECRETS TO DISPLAY)
"DEAR CHILD" HE SAID (WITH CORDIAL GRACE)
"HOW HAS IT COME TO PASS, THAT NO OTHER SOUL HAS COME
THIS ROUTE WITH NO SECRETS FROM HIS PAST"
"LOOK AROUND YOU" I REPLIED (IN UNCERTAINTY & DWIN-
DLING FAITH)
"NO GRASS HERE GROWS, NOR TRUTHS ARE TOLD, IN THIS
BLOOMINGLY EVIL PLACE"
WITH THAT HE ROSE TO A FORMIDABLE POSE
AND MODESTLY TIPPED HIS BRIM
"I AM AN HONEST SOUL" HE SAID
"AND GOOD CAN ALWAYS WIN"

NAOMI PACE, SAS '99

GHETTO STREETS

AS I WAS WALKING
ALONG GHETTO STREETS
I SEE
THE SAD FACE OF REALITY
AS I MOVE ON

A WOMAN
CARRIES HER BABY
BEGGING FOR MONEY
TO SMOKE UP HER ADDICTION
AS I MOVE ON

I HEAR
GUNSHOTS AROUND THE CORNER
AND SEE THE BLOOD STAINED PAVEMENT
WHERE I STAND
AS I MOVE ON

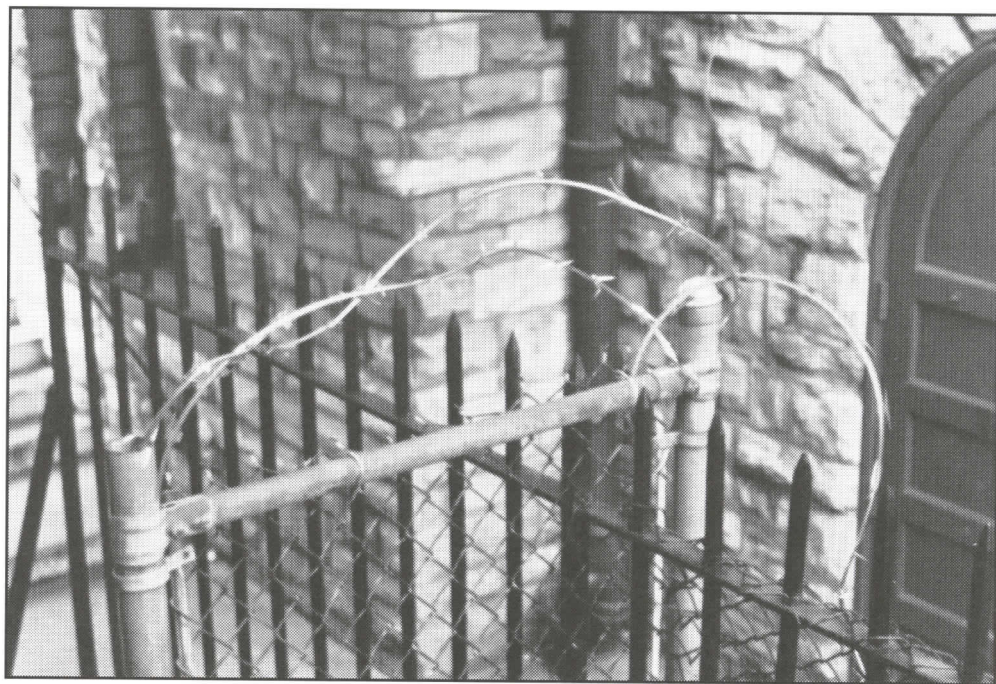
I SMELL
THE FRIED PLATANOS
MIXED WITH THE MARIJUANA SMOKE
AND I SEE
AT LEAST FIVE MURALS
OF DEAD MEMORIES
ON ONE BLOCK ALONE
AS I MOVE ON

EVERY FIVE MINUTES
I HEAR SIRENS
FROM POLICE VEHICLES
AND AMBULANCES IN A HURRY
AS I MOVE ON

A CROWD FORMS
AROUND A BODY
TALKING GOSSIP
ABOUT WHO PUSHED WHO
AS I MOVE ON

I IGNORE IT
I CAN'T STAND IT
I CAN'T TAKE IT
ANYMORE
I JUST MOVE ON.

JESSICA SEPULVEDA, SAS '97



UNTITLED, LYVETT VELAZQUEZ, SAS '98

MAZE OF CONFUSION

I CAN REMEMBER THAT NIGHT AS CLEARLY AS I SEE YOUR EYES BEFORE ME. I WAS ALONE AND WANDERING. NO ONE WAS AROUND. THE WAVES CRASHED AGAINST THE JAGGED ROCKS. I WALKED UPON THE WARM SAND. I BENT DOWN AND LOOKED FAR OUT INTO THE SEA.

I SAW NOTHING. IT WAS THAT BLACKNESS THAT SCARED ME SO; IT WAS AS IF THE UNIVERSE HAD COME TO A COMPLETE STANDSTILL. THAT BLACKNESS DEFINED MY LIFE. THE FUTURE WAS AS EMPTY AND LONELY AS THE SEA. I LOOKED TO THE PAST AND SAW SHADES OF HAPPINESS, BUT THOSE OF SADNESS ALWAYS OVERSHADOWED. I FELT SO ALONE. TEARS SLOWLY DRIPPED DOWN MY FLUSHED CHEEKS AS I SAW NO FUTURE. THERE I WAS SITTING ON A BUNCH OF SHELLS AND SEAWEED WISHING ONLY ONE THING, A CHANCE TO BE ONE WITH THE OCEAN. I CAN BE A WAVE THAT ALWAYS COMES BACK TO THE SHORE, ITS ONLY FRIEND. I DESPERATELY LONGED FOR SOME PEACE OF MIND.

I STOOD UP AND SLOWLY TURNED AROUND. I BEGAN TO WALK, FIRST AT A SLOW PACE AND THEN FASTER AND FASTER. BEFORE I KNEW IT I WAS RUNNING. THE SWEAT WAS RUSHING DOWN MY BACK. THE THUNDER WAS MONSTROUS AND THE LIGHTENING PICTURESQUE. ALL THE WATER IN THE HEAVENS BEGAN TO POUR UPON THE DROWNING EARTH.

BOTH MY HEART AND BREATH WERE RUNNING OUT OF TIME. I WAS TRYING TO ESCAPE FROM SOMETHING OR SOMEONE. BUT WHO AND WHY? I DON'T KNOW. I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT WOULD CAUSE SO MUCH TERROR TO FILL MY HEART.

I DIDN'T STOP RUNNING UNTIL I HAD REACHED SHELTER. I WAS DRENCHED. MY TEARS OF ANGUISH AND FEAR WERE MIXED WITH THOSE OF THE ANGELS. I CAN'T EXPLAIN MY FEAR. I JUST KNOW THAT IT WAS THERE. ONLY IF I KNEW WHAT IT WAS, MAYBE THEN I COULD ASK FOR HELP.

UNTIL THEN I MUST WANDER AMONG THESE ALL TOO FAMILIAR ROADS THAT ALWAYS LEAD BACK TO WHERE I BEGAN. IT IS A MAZE, MY LIFE. SO MANY TWISTS AND TURNS. I'M LOST IN THIS PLACE. DOES SALVATION LIE BEYOND THIS MAZE, THE MAZE OF MY CONFUSION?

I WONDER.....

NICOLE CASTEN, SON '99

UNTITLED

I AM THE FANTASY
YOU ARE THE POISON
BLACK AND WHITE INTERTWINE
INVADING EACH OTHER VIOLENTLY

SHAME SITS WITH A GRIN ON ITS FACE
SEXUALITY LOOSES ITS SACREDNESS
SHAME BECOMES A PERMANENT SHADOW

THE SOUL IS SOLD TO THE DEVIL FOR A MEAGER PRICE
EMPTINESS MAKES A PERMANENT HOME IN THE HEART
BLACKNESS IS THE STEREOTYPE
BLACKNESS IS THE SHAME

I KNEEL AT THE ALTER OF MY RACE BEGGING FOR MY LIFE
BUT THE POISON IS IN MY BLOOD
THEY TURN THEIR FACES FROM ME

RENEE D. BLACKWELL, ALUMNAE , CLASS OF '94



BRONX BEAT, LYVETT VELAZQUEZ, SAS '98

THE YOUNG LORD

SITTING ON A STOOP,
BLACKS, ONE BLOCK TO THE RIGHT
WHITES, ONE BLOCK TO THE LEFT
LATINOS IN THE MIDDLE
THE WAY IT WAS

THOUGHT THAT GARBAGE
GOT PICKED UP ONCE A WEEK
WAS I WRONG
THOUGHT THAT A CHURCH
WAS FOR THE PEOPLE
BOY, WAS I WRONG

UNTIL ONE DAY
THESE DUDES CAME
TOOK ALL THE GARBAGE CANS
THREW TRASH ON THE STREET
TOLD THOSE PIGS
TO PICK UP THAT MESS
THE WAY IT WAS
ON THE BLOCK TO THE LEFT

HELPED THOSE DUDES
MY PUERTO RICAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS
FIX AN ABANDONED CHURCH
SO THAT BABIES GOT FED
AND MOTHER'S GOT A BREAK

HELD MY HEAD UP HIGH
AS WE GOT LED OUT IN CUFFS

WE BLOCKED TRAFFIC
ON HARLEM STREETS
MADE A PEOPLE'S CHURCH
STARTED A REVOLUTION
FOR PUERTO RICO'S INDEPENDENCE
FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
IN AMERICA
RACIAL JUSTICE
AND CIVIL RIGHTS

A YOUNG LORD
IN THE 60'S

JESSICA SEPULVEDA, SAS '97

SHAME

I'VE BEEN CURSED WITH A DISEASE FROM BIRTH
MY MAMA HAD IT, AND SO DID HER MAMA'S MAMA!
I'M COVERED HEAD TO TOE IN THIS DARK DISEASE
IT GREET'S ME IN THE MORNING
AND IT ALWAYS REMEMBERS TO WISH ME GOOD NIGHT.
TO ME, IT'S A FRIEND, TO OTHERS AND ENEMY.
THIS IS WHAT MADE THAT WOMAN SCREAM,
IT MADE THE MAN CROSS THE STREET IN FRONT OF ME,
IT MADE ME LOSE MY JOB THIS AWFUL AFTERNOON!
OH, THIS FRIEND OF MINE THAT IS A CURSE.
I CRY AND SAY "THERE'S NO SHAME IN MY COLOR!"
I'M JUST LIKE YOU, AND HER, AND HIM.
THERE'S NO SHAME, NO SHAME, NO SHAME,
YET I HOLD MY HEAD DOWN IN THEIR GLARE,
I STAND BY HELPLESS AS THIS DISEASE SWALLOWS ME,
MY VOICE, MY TEARS, MY DREAMS-THEY HAVE NO EFFECT.
I'VE BEEN CURSED WITH A DISEASE FROM DEATH
IT LIVED BEFORE ME,
IT LIVES WITHIN ME,
IT WILL LIVE LONG AFTER I AM GONE.
TO HIDE MY DISEASE IS IMPOSSIBLE,
THE SHAPE OF MY NOSE, MY EARS, MY WALK,
MY SMILE, THOSE EYES...THEY ALL PROCLAIM THIS
DISEASE LOUD AND CLEAR. I CANNOT HIDE WHAT I DIDN'T INVENT,
I CANNOT HIDE MY PERSONALITY,
I CANNOT HIDE MY WHOLE HISTORY!
WHAT, I CAN HIDE IS THIS SHAME-
THE SHAME THAT FOLLOWS ME CONSTANTLY!
I CAN HIDE IT AND I WILL.
LOOK AT ME, LOOK AT ME
LOOK AT MY COLOR, LOOK AT ME.
SEE THE BEAUTY THAT FLOWS FROM WITHIN,
SEE THE LIFE THAT YOU HAVE TOO!
THEN TELL ME, IF YOU CAN, TELL ME,
HOW CAN YOU CALL IT "SHAME?"
THIS LIFE THAT LIVES WITHIN YOU AND ME!
THERE'S NO SHAME, NO SHAME
AND FINALLY IN A SICK WORLD GONE LOST,
I STAND UP TALL AND SAY
"THERE'S NO SHAME IN MY COLOR!"

ESE AKPOFURE, SAS '99

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE HAIKU'S

1

IN THE SOLACE OF MY ROOM
I SPEAK
MY ANCESTORS ARE HEARING ME

2

HEARTBREAKING
THE SOUNDS COLLIDE AND I REMAIN
ON THE MIDDLE PASSAGE

3

SHE COMES TO ME IN SPIRIT
AND I WON'T FORGET WHAT SHE SAYS
HELLO

4

SHE IS WITH ME
AS I BRAVE THE STORM
OF BEING HELD AGAINST MY WILL

5

THE SHIP CREAKS AND I ROLL INTO THE
ARMS OF DEATH
AND I WELCOME HER

6

WATCHING THEM, MY SORROW BLEEDING
I HAVE LEFT THEM BEHIND
TO SUFFER.

PAULA PRYCE, GRADUATE '97

I RISE

I RISE EACH MORNING WITH A SMILE ON MY
FACE
THANKING THE FATHER FOR HIS MERCY AND
GRACE
I DROP TO MY KNEES, AND RAISE MY HANDS
YES TO YOUR WILL
I AM ABLE TO STAND
OH LORD, I THANK YOU FOR MY HANDS AND FEET
THROUGH THE PIT OF MY BELLY
YOUR HOLY WORDS I SHALL SPEAK
TO FEED MY SOUL IN DANCE AND IN SONG
FOR HEAVEN I SHALL BE AND HEAVEN I BELONG
WITH YOU HOLY FATHER
THROUGH YOUR MERCY AND GRACE
I WILL RISE EACH MORNING
WITH A SMILE ON MY FACE

MELVINA CLARKE, SAS '98

POWER

I DON'T NEED TO SCREAM
THERE IS NO NEED
I DON'T NEED TO SHOUT
NO NEED TO BE LOUD.
THE STING OF MY WORD
IS ALL THAT NEEDS TO BE HEARD
IT ROLLS OFF MY TONGUE
THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH

THE SOUND OF MY LANGUAGE
TELLS IT ALL
I SWEETEN THE ENEMY
AND INDEED HE WILL FALL
OR, I BELITTLE HIM A BIT
THAT WOULD BE ALL

THE POWER OF MY WORD
DOES NOT DERIVE FROM
THUNDEROUS ROARS
A SIMPLE REPLY,
WILL DO JUST FINE
A FIERCE LOOK,
WILL DO THE TRICK
HIS REACTION,
WILL SURELY BE QUICK.

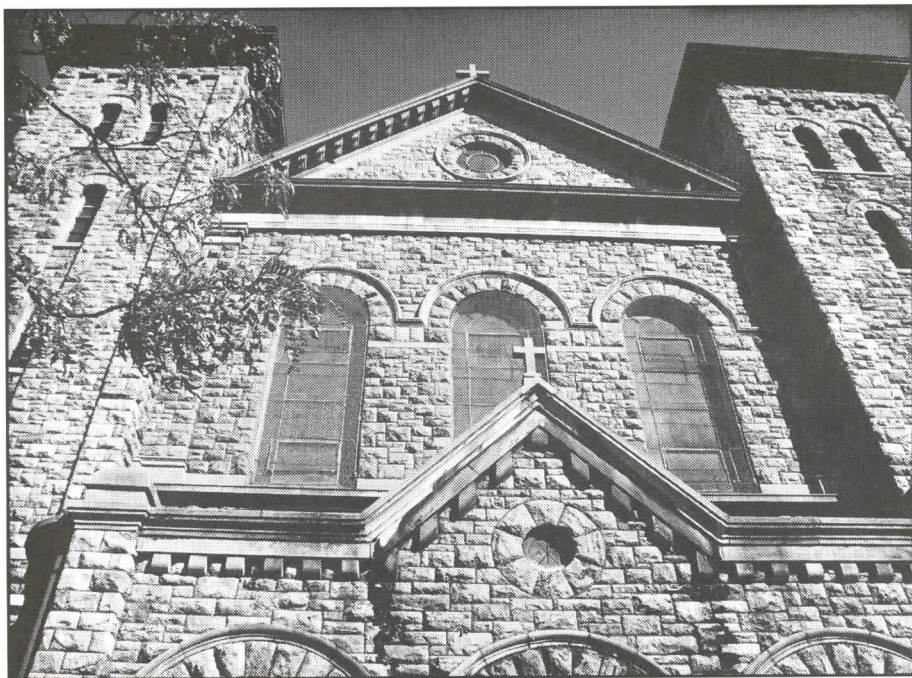
AND YET
I DON'T NEED TO SCREAM
THERE'S NO NEED
THE SOUND OF MY LANGUAGE
TELLS IT ALL.
THE STING OF MY WORD,
ROLLS OF MY TONGUE
THE STABBING SOUNDS OF MY LANGUAGE,
THE POWER OF MY WORD IS MY SWORD.

DIANA R. ROBLES, SAS '97

UNTITLED

HEAVEN CAME ONE DAY LONG AGO WHEN I PRESENTED MY FACE UPON THE
EARTH,
MY LIGHT RADIATED AND REVIVED LIVES BEYOND BELIEF.
MIRACLES RESULTED. HOSTILITY AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS GREW.
THEY BLANKETED MY VOICE. YET, MY SPIRIT SPLIT FROM MY BONES
AND WAS SPILT ONTO MY PEOPLE. THEIR IMPURITIES WERE WASHED AWAY
AND THEY FELT THE LOVE I POSSESSED. HEAVEN CAME ONE DAY
AND LIVED WITH THE PEOPLE OF EARTH. HEAVEN WILL COME AGAIN AND
MY PEOPLE WILL LIVE WITH ME.

CYNDIA ROMULUS, SON '97

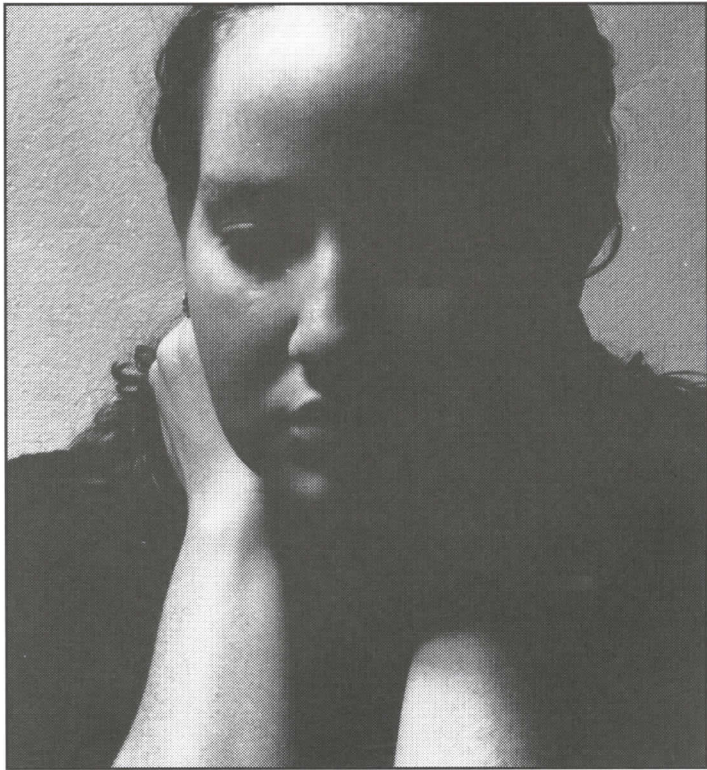


UNTITLED, LYVETT VELAZQUEZ, SAS '98

17 IS TOO YOUNG

MOMMY, MOMMY
WHERE DID YOU GO?
I LOOKED FOR YOU TODAY
BUT YOU WERE GONE.
I MISS YOU MOMMY
WHY DID YOU DIE?
17 IS TOO YOUNG TO BE WITHOUT A MOTHER.
DID YOU KNOW HOW MUCH
I LOVED YOU MOMMY?
I SEE MY FRIENDS TALKING
ABOUT THEIR MOTHERS:
"OH, I GOT A CARD TODAY..."
"WE WENT SHOPPING AND..."
DO THEY KNOW HOW LUCKY
THEY ARE MOMMY?
SUCH A SHORT TIME ON THIS EARTH.
YOU GAVE ME LIFE-
WHY COULDN'T YOU STAY A LITTLE LONGER?
I LOOKED FOR YOUR FACE TIME AND TIME AGAIN
AT ALL THOSE SPECIAL TIMES BUT MOMMY
YOU WERE NOT THERE.
AND NOW AS GRADUATION APPROACHES
I WILL LOOK FOR YOU AGAIN.
SEARCHING AND SEARCHING
FOR THAT SWEET FACE THAT COMFORTED ME SO,
THAT WIPED MY TEARS, SHOWED SUCH LOVE,
THE FACE OF MY FRIEND.
I THINK I'D GIVE JUST ABOUT ANYTHING
FOR A HUG, MOMMY.
I HAVE YET TO FIND A PLACE
THAT I FELT THAT SAFE.
MOMMY, MOMMY,
DO THEY KNOW HOW LUCKY THEY ARE?
17 IS TOO YOUNG TO BE WITHOUT A MOTHER.

MARYBETH MCQUIRE, SAS 97



SELF-REALIZATION, MEGHAN GILROY, SAS '97

Nature's High-Rights



In The Middle Of Paradise, Lyvett Velazquez, SAS '98

Southern Nights

Darker.....

than the northern nights,

Cooler.....

than a morning's dawn.

Your nights.....

Bring the beauty of Ebony to life.

Your nights....

Cast a spell of quiet peace,

Your nights....

Caress the souls of weary hearts.

Your nights.....

Shelter the secrets of our days,
on a moonlit night.

Your nights.....

Harbor the deep sweetness of the earth.

S
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Leticia Hepburn, SNR '97

Reflections

Still the waters of the ocean lie
While I pondered on times gone by
I saw a face on the reflected moon
I heard night creatures singing a lover's tune
Though times of happiness seem long gone
Haunted with memories and things undone
With an open heart I reach again
To another time where love remains

Cyndia Romulus, SON '97



Untitled, Lyvett Velazquez, SAS '98



Untitled, Lyvett Velazquez, SAS '98

Untitled

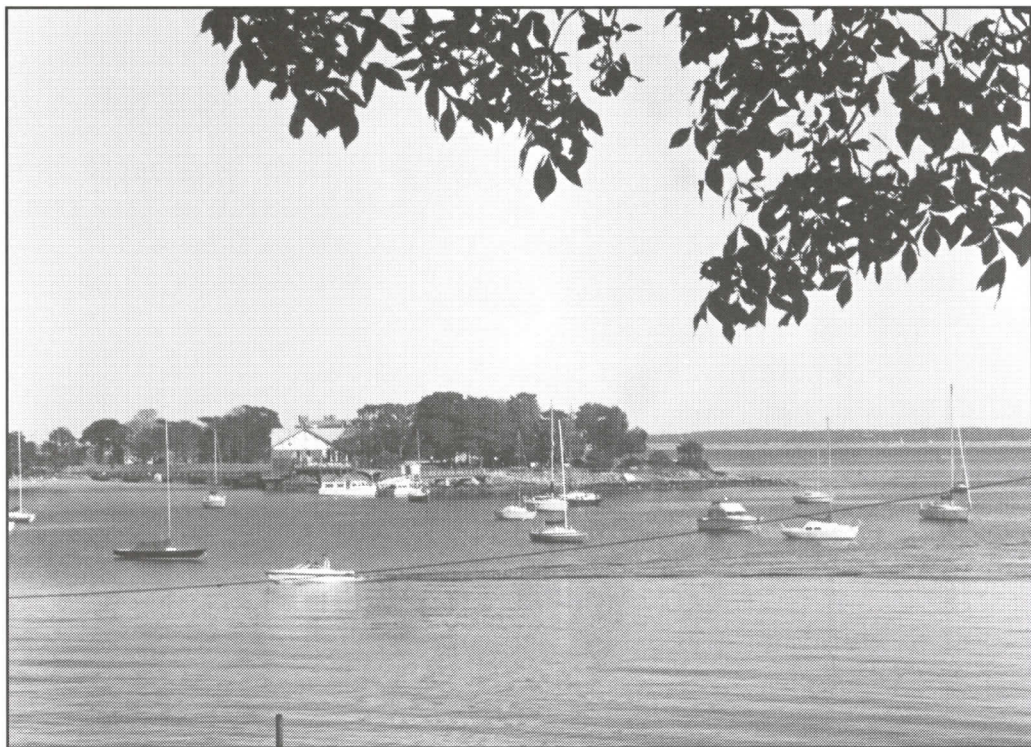
I saw a flower die with a tear in its eyes
Its dress had been torn apart
By human hands
Its dream has been shattered by reality
We may not know how significant life is
But for a flower, it's all its
hopes and dreams
Its beauty was one of a kind
Its skin was the softest of all, but
In its eyes the pain was relevant
When I first saw her white dress
torn apart by hands that were
Stronger than hers, and that she
Could not fight
I realized that men cannot
Appreciate the beauty of nature
They rather destroy than build
For what its worth, men only want
To satisfy their needs

Patricia Bernard, SAS '00

Untitled

Ocean You are Alive
Roaring, sighing, whispering
Sending messages in lapping, noisy waves
Mischievous You chase me in child-like water games
We play in frothy waves 'til you retreat
Sheepishly back into the depths
Sea gifts you bring
Beauty from the deep
Gratefully I accept your gifts
Powerfully You give
Ocean You are Alive Shimmering in my Soul

Dr. Connie Vance,
Dean and Professor,
School of Nursing



Untitled, Sandra M. Vasquez, SAS '98

Sun Watch

I'm watching you,

As your sunny glow falls upon the earth.

And I watch with fascination,

As the leaves of Autumn are wrapped in your embrace.

I'm watching you,

As the clouds move away to give you free rein,
in

this duel to conquer
our blue skies.

While on an overcast day,

the rain refused to get in your way.

I'm watching you,

As you smile upon the children at play.

And....

Give true meaning to a bright morning light.

I've seen you,

As you set your rays of warmth towards the West.

I'm watching you,

hoping....to see you again, perhaps on
another.....SUNNY DAY!

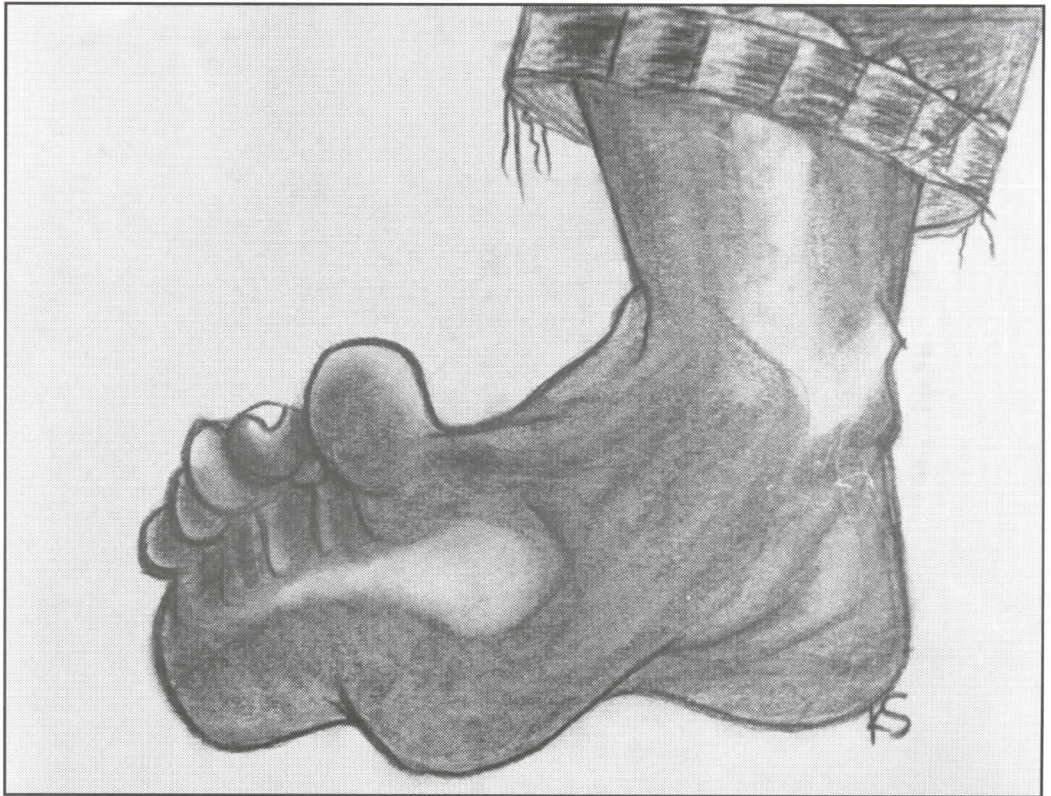
Leticia Hepburn, SNR '97

Perfection Does Exist

From a distance I can see the reflection of the waning moon's light on the surface of the dark and frigid waters. I can see a bridge from here also. It is decorated with festive green lights topped with red peaks. It appears similar to giant Christmas trees. The aroma of the sea air tickles my nostrils. An airplane occasionally rumbles through the star infested sky and disappears into the night. Rustling leaves echo in my ears as a crisp and bitter wind gusts through the branches of surrounding trees. A faint shatter of tide against the rocks on the shore below becomes a soothing tranquil lullaby. Here illumination is scarce, yet beyond the glistening bay of water are thousands of small twinkling lights. These lights belong to the city, and for tonight are my.

Benedetta Serraino, SAS '00

Love And Relationships



Ex-Girlfriend's Foot, Keisha Smith, SAS'00

A First Love

So pure
So pristine
So soft
To the touch
Never imagined
So much
So Perfect
A First Love
I had one
In a time
That seems like
Forever ago
One like I'll
Never again know
Now, it's a bit contaminated
Somewhat aged
A little rough
Just around the edges
Spend eternity plus infinity
Trying to get it back
Wishing for
Another just like it
But no
Never again like-
There's nothing like-
I had one
There is only one
First
A
First
Love

Natalie "Renaissance" Thomas, SAS '00



Sandra M. Vasquez, "Untitled" SAS '98

African Son

Your smile, like a summer's day
fresh & open
scorches my body like the sun
at high noon
making me hot and sticky
wanting to rid myself of my garments

I wrap myself in your gaze
the humid breeze
escaping your nostrils as you breathe
you give flight to memories past
and unselfishly allow me shelter...

The grass below my feet
caresses my soles
just as your unspoken words do
my soul
and the moment begins...

The sun shower brimming from
your eyes bathes my essence
of creation
holding me fervently
beneath the indigo sky
and I welcome your presence
with open arms.

Paula Pryce, Graduate '97

FRIENDS

Used to be tight
Closer than sisters or maybe twins
Mama warned me it could happen
Telling tales with my close close friend
Nights spent together telling
Old Tom that he ain't gonna be cute.
Days spent together plaiting
Our hair trying to look fine.
Mama warned me it could happen
That sad day sitting cool by the fireplace
Midnight conversations talking about nothing
Secret messages that really don't mean a thing
She said "Be careful...respect your friends"
But we're closer than sisters
So it really was all right.
Painting fingernails deep deep red
Wondering together who our Mr. Rights' gonna be
Then Old Tom opened his mouth
Told a long sad tale about a friendship
Confused me and my close close friend
And Mama said "Going to be all right...gonna be all right"
And, damn, Old Tom ain't here no more
Didn't stay to see the friendship get ruined
Mama said...Mama said...
And me and my friend, don't see no more
And me and my friend, don't talk no more
And me and my friend, ain't friends no more
Used to be my close close friend
Closer than sisters or maybe twins
But it ain't so no more!

Ese Akpofure, SAS '99

Deception

How can you say you love me
when your playing hard to get
you smile one day, and frown
the next the sequence of a test
you whisper to me softly
and yet you do not call
a letter would be sufficient
but your heart is cold and raw

Melvina Clarke, SAS '99

Spring Cleaning

It begins at the core of my heart and then it rapidly spreads throughout my entire being. The pain never seems to cease. I thought it was buried under all those tears. They used to flow down my flushed cheeks as if my eyes were a leaky faucet that someone carelessly forgot to turn off.

The plumber was finally reached. The neighbors must have told him about my troubles. A little bit of his handiwork and it was fixed in no time. He sealed the holes, but forgot to mention that the cement would not permanently prevent the pipes from bursting open again. My house is not prepared to handle another flood. Everything that I've worked so very hard for could be taken away with the currents. I can't let that happen.

I thought his job was finished. All that was left was the broken tiles in my bathroom. I just swept them underneath the carpet; it's a habit that I can't seem to shake.

That hole in my pipe didn't just appear out of nowhere. The pipe has been rotting away for some time now. People have been careless and such treatment can and will not be tolerated.

There were many plumbers who said I could call whenever I needed assistance. Each one gave me a little help in the kitchen. But I was always making the coffee and to top it off I always offered them pastries. What man can resist sweets? They took what they could get and gave nothing in return. Not even one thank you.

So many years I trusted without doubt or suspicion. I was more than happy to share my food. I never seemed to learn that once the garbage disposal was fixed and he had eaten everything I had to offer he would pack up his tools and leave me with a manual. A little black book with a step by step instruction on how to keep a household tidy and presentable. There's only one problem, Japanese is not my native tongue.

The last plumber was faithful to his promise, for a while, but he couldn't provide me with what I needed, a friend.

Well, it's time to clean up. I hope everything is in place. I'm having some friends over. I have to put on my happy face. The disguise has never failed me, yet. I will never reveal to them the secrets that I have locked within the depths of my soul. They must not know of the termites and rats that have been dancing in my attic.

I can't help myself from hoping that one of these days I'll be able to afford a remodeling job. My apartment definitely needs some alterations. Maybe a construction worker can break through these old, decrepit walls and make new rooms. A few new windows that will allow the sun to rejuvenate my aging skin. Maybe he can even get rid of those rusty pipes and long forgotten tiles beneath the rug.

Nevertheless, I must forget about the disorder in my bathroom. The dust has been collecting rather nicely in the bedroom. I'm hoping that soon I'll be able to make a few portraits of dead dreams.

There is no one I can depend on except myself. The rug stains and broken glass continue to haunt my daily labor. No need to fret. A modern woman is a miracle worker. the rug stains are neatly hidden under my big, beautiful, red couch and the glass, well, I just swept it behind Leverne, my potted plant.

Everything will go as planned, as long as there are no trespassers on the restricted grounds. I have to purchase an alarm system, maybe then strangers will heed my warning.

Nicole Casten, SON '99

HOLDING HIM

Somehow, before it happened, I heard him cry.
I leapt from the bed before his wails
caused you worry.
I saw the way he looked at you at his last feeding.
Jealous, I want that look too.
That I love you, so love me back-
That I need you, please protect me: look!
Surely it isn't a sin to be this proud!
Who does he look like?
Who will he take after?
Your quiet thoughtfulness?
My eyes!
Your smile!
My temper?
I see you quietly watching for a moment
then leave us to share our time.
Watching his face brighten,
I silently thank you.

Oni Pendarvis, SAS '97

A Cheatin' Heart

It tis so gran' dis ting me made
me always stop an' sava
you may tink me ah' nah faze'
to stop an' sip im' flava

Me cah nah stan' dis luv me crave
it make me squeal an' suffa
look 'pon me good dis romance slave
while wit me boyfren' bruddah

Me cyan explain dis' rocky grave
it vex me like none 'udda
me only know dis' luv nah fade
cos' 'im me pickney faddah

Me always want a luv dat saves
de one dat make tings 'otta
de sea, it shine a bright new way
...I trap witin' 'im watta.

Paula Pryce, Graduate '97

Traveling Through Space

I want to gather up the yellow car and sunshine and smiles
into a living photograph. To carry in my purse.
To reassure me that days like that do exist.
To negate moments which pass in between now
and that afternoon I saw you
lying upside down on the hill
with a smile on your face.

The angle of your head as we got on the road,
and laughed at the other car,
for no reason
(except that, had it been there 15 minutes earlier,
all of us would have been embarrassed)
And your happy sigh a few minutes earlier,
as we climbed into the convertible,
free to reach our arms
and collect the wind
as we sped by the hill,
that I could swear I saw once in an instructional film.
(Turning the bend, I realized how real this one was.)
And stealing glances,
while you didn't care about the road.
And not realizing I would not see my
watch on my wrist again
and you reaching out to touch me
to touch skin
other than the upholstery
and the blue sky before you
and waving hills behind.
And your hand loose on the steering wheel.

We drove on a distance.
Too far, it seems.
And I would see rain shine on your face
through the night sky window.
(I should never sleep in a room
with such a large picture of escape again.
That window at the foot of my bed)
That beautiful moon when we said good-bye.
And separated to live happily with other people.

But now, not just in my dreams,
I see the steering wheel slip
and I am aware that I have not kissed your eyes
in a long time.
And I am too groggy in the morning,
and do not realize
that you have never left your bed.
Or that glorious hill,
where once I saw you sprawled
(with a smile on your face).

Tammy Rose, SAS '97



Bubble Festival, Lyvett Velazquez, SAS '98

Games For The Young

Sneaking out late at night
You left a note on the seat of my car
Deep asleep I didn't feel you go
But I acknowledged your return
the slipping of your fingers
between mine
"Hurry Home"
I thought of your message
tucked in my breast pocket
All day
Watching clocks
Keeping time
At 5 o'clock
I got a speeding ticket
The door was slightly ajar
low lights
Just a tub of water
Clean robes
No you
Later I ate the food
you left

You came
teasing and smiling
No talk
I will call in sick tomorrow

Oni Pendarvis, SAS '97

...Sitting On A Rock

Here I am sitting in class,
I am not here
emotionally not mentally

I am still sitting,
in front of him,
holding him in my arms,
hugging him ever so tight,
kissing him tenderly,
looking at him,
wanting him so much to love him.

There I've said it
oh, no it cannot be,
but he is so much like me
so caring,
affectionate,
funny,
sweet,
adorable,
oh I can go,
on and on...
never has anyone
been so good to me.

Oh, if only I could stay here
sitting on the rock
near the sea,
under the tree,
listening to the splash,
absorbing the wind,
sitting in front of him,
holding him,
hugging him,
kissing him,
looking at him,
wanting him,
all for me.

Yet, here I am
sitting in class.
I am not here
emotionally nor mentally.

Diana Robles, SAS '97

The Visit

In the silence of the night he visits me nightly
He rules my atmosphere.
He shapes my dreams.
He whispers quietly in my ear
the places we'll see, the love we'll make
and how my body will reflect union.

In the silence of the night he lays beside me and warms my bed.
He leads my soul to the home he has created for me.
I do not fear for I am free with him,
not bound to any earthly worries.
He speaks of the time when we will meet in the sun.
Only in the day our dreams can be reality,
when the dawn breaks through the night and the sun kisses my face.
The tear on my face reflects the loss I feel.
My body shakes with anticipation and
the day is spent watching and waiting for night.

Renee D. Blackwell, Alumnae, Class of '94

Watching My Back All The Time Just Isn't Worth Time

I was not known as the High School graduate or as the writer
But instead I was known as the bully and as the fighter

Constantly, I was having to watch my back
Making sure I was not going to be under attack

Yeah I was bad, and I always left my mark
But in the meantime I was paranoid and couldn't stay out past dark

I wished for the day when I could just go outside and sit
Because having to watch my back all the time just wasn't worth it

Sister vs. Sister. Black women fighting one another
Over things like how I looked at another's lover
Or how one girl disrespected my mother

I've been through the stage of carrying knives for protection
And letting my knife drop on purpose
If a group of girls were walking in my direction
I proved to them I was the boss by delivering a quick knock out or hit

But having to watch my back all the time still wasn't worth it

Oh yes, I was arrogant and played into their evil game
But now when I think about it my head hangs in shame

For I finally realized that no matter how bad I was
there was always someone worse than me
And that watching and always in pain is something I did not want to be

So today is the day that I will break out the cake
And whether you agree with me or not I will continue to celebrate

I have decided to take the advice of a young man who is wise
From this day forward I will talk things out,
I have learned to compromise

I know from the love I have received that love does conquer all
I promise myself to fight for no one, I will not fall

Whether it be for family, friends, or even my man
I will not turn back but will continue to make my stand

No matter who needs help, I will step in for no one else
If they have a problem, I will let them handle it themselves

No matter how upset, agitated, or mad I get
I will use my head instead, and will not use my fists

And no matter who laughs at me, comes in my face,
or what fight they may try to pick
I will continue to make my stand because
watching my back all the time just isn't worth it.

Shanika L. Victor, SAS '99

Dream Cloud

I am an explorer
I've traveled over
Many distant lands
In search of some hidden truth

At last a discovery has been made
I have a secret
A flame burns inside me
It screams as it gracefully shivers
Its way to an open window
It needs to spread its scorching arms

You did this to me
Torched my heart
Simply by flicking
A match to the
Bleeding gasoline

Can you read the signs?
Can you see the smoke rising?
The clouds speak of
You and me

You and me
And a bit of privacy
No onlookers

No probing eyes
Lose yourself
In me
Don't think, Don't analyze
Let go
Feel me
Feel you

Sever the ties
You hold with the world
What do they know?

Take a risk
No hesitation, No pauses

I want to breathe you
Swallow the sweetness
Of your being
Kiss you passionately hard
Squeeze and dig at your insides
We - Two
Me - You
Lying beside each other
Your heart thumping madly

I want to listen to your
Tiny blood vessels pop

I want to smell
Your silky, smooth hair
Tenderly caress every inch
Of your preciousness

I want to taste you
Lick your lips
Moisten your skin
I want you
To want me
Don't shy away
I'll carry you and me
Heaven we will be
Drifting away on my
Dream Cloud

Nicole Casten, SON '99

Letter To A Friend

February 1997

Dear...,

I am who I am and I don't have to apologize to anyone because of it. Funny, although I say that, I feel like I have to sometimes. Everyone says that I am such a strong individual but I feel like a weakling inside. I always try to make it better for other people and don't stop to think about myself. I am a product of poor self-esteem and my actions mirror that. Wasn't it said somewhere that Black women are destined to suffer?...

I had high hopes for us once. But I didn't take the time out to have high hopes for myself. You continue to say I love you in one breath while your hips are joined with someone else's at the same time. She's a fine sister you say. She ain't no sister of mine. I ain't no victim in this war of love, I am a major player although no one seems to notice, especially you; you seem to have forgotten...

I was very naive in believing that love was so simple and could last through anything that came our way. It took me time to realize that I was not the weak one...or some may say. I accepted you the way you were, flaws and all and I wrapped myself up in images of you...or what I wanted you to be. Crumbling visions are the ones I discard because I must keep strong for myself and not be sidetracked by you or by your images of her. You cannot have everything you desire in life...all of us accept that except you.

I gave you more of myself than I gave to myself and drowned myself on the reverie of "us". To reap the rewards that lay in wait for us, we must pay attention and live by the truth. Your deceit has brought me nothing but pain but the shame lies within you, reflecting the likeness of your actions. You have failed again and I have to save my love for someone else. In time, I will accept the love of someone else and continue to live my life without unrealistic images of you.

Sincerely,

Me

Paula Pryce, Graduate '97

And The Answer Is

Starting over
Ain't no where near
Easy
Tryin'
To figure out
What
I'm goin' to do
Since what I
Ain't got
is you
You have
subtracted yourself
from the
complex mathematical equation
which is my life
You screwed up the answer
which came simply
before
Now I can't seem to figure out
My solution set
New equation
Should I begin
By adding many men
And divide myself between them
Or
Subtract them all
And multiply work
and I
But why
Should my world stop because you're no longer a part of it
Possibly there's some
equal proportion to
working and pimping
Maybe I should just
call you
No
Can't do that
I gotta stay on
my twelve step
(Remember that?)
I should probably be
looking for i
You know
The square root of -1
I just pushed
the equals button on my calculator
Oh s***-
The battery died

Natalie "Renaissance" Thomas, SAS '00

UNFORGETTABLE

I SIT IN A DAZE BY THE WINDOW
WONDERING WHEN THE DAYS TURNED INTO YEARS
DANCING BUTTERFLIES GREET THE LONELY WILLOW
MY COMPANION IS GONE WITH FAREWELL TEARS

YESTERDAY

A PETAL LANDED SO SOFTLY ON MY CHEEK
HEAVEN OPENED AND CRYSTALS FELL OUT...
REMINDING ME OF MY COMPANION'S EYES
AND THE SKY WAS PAINTED THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PINK!

TODAY

I FEEL FAINT WITH A LINGERING LOVE
A SIGH COVERS MY HEART LIKE A PERMANENT SEAL
I REMEMBER WITH A CRY MY UNFORGETTABLE DOVE
WHEN DID OUR PARTING BECOME SUCH AN OPEN DEAL?

TOMORROW

I SHALL COUNT HEAVEN'S SPARKLING EYES
REMEMBERING WITH A SIGH MY COMPANION'S VOICE
I'LL BE AWAKENED AT DAWN BY THE BIRDS SHRILL CRIES
AND A FEATHER WILL FLOAT AIMLESSLY ACROSS THE THUNDERING BLUE

UNFORGETTABLE IS WHAT YOU ARE
BY THE BEACH ON A MID SUMMER'S NIGHT
MY COMPANION WILL ALWAYS BE MINE
FULFILLING GOD'S AWESOME PROMISE!

ESE AKPOFURE, SAS '99

Momentum And Change



Untitled, Beth Benson, SAS '99

Swinging

To my dear friend
Pendulum
What a catchy name
We are not so different you see
You are not so straight and narrow
You swing back and forth
Just like me

Yes you do look exquisite in those red pumps
But they are definitely too high for me
Nothing ordinary about you
You sexy, smooth talker
Make me laugh, like you always do
Make all the madness disappear

Where do we go from here?
I know, "it's all good"
But aren't you worried?
Don't you think we should know
BY NOW

Yeah, you're right, we are young
"Have the best of both worlds"-
Well that sounds lovely
But I still wish I could fit somewhere

My world always seems to be crashing down on me
I don't like it one bit- neither does my other half
You and I both have become accustomed to the
pain and confusion of not knowing
I can't imagine
Who wouldn't enjoy soul screeching, heart wrenching,
pulse bounding EMOTIONAL TRAUMA?

Nicole Casten, SON '99

Love that Latin Beat

The sound of timbales move my feet
Vibrations swallow up my rhythmic soul
So sweet is the sound of that Latin beat.

Fast paced meringue makes me move my hips
Whether I'm in the street or at a club
The sound of timbales move my feet.

The radio that played those salsa hits
Seemed to unleash my Latin soul at once
So sweet is the sound of that Latin beat.

Strangers listen through the headphones every day
The familiar beat makes me bop my head
The sound of timbales makes me move my feet.

The Salsero sings directly to me
The ancestral music grips my native heart
So sweet is the sound of that Latin beat.

I wish to sing salmeringuero musica
That newborn love I heard on the radio
The sound of timbales move my feet
So sweet is the sound of that Latin beat.

Jessica Sepulveda, SAS '97

O.G. (The Original Ganstahhhh...)

MouRNing...START

ESsEnCE
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CELEBRATINGGGGGGGG!!!
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SUMING

SPREAD

Gripping staminA

neCeSSItY

spa

ssssSSSSSSSSSSSM

ATOMIC

SURPRISE!!!!!!!

Orgas

MMMMMMM...mmmmmmmmMMMMMIC

Solution

never- ending.....starlight.....

Paula Pryce, Graduate '97

cHaNgEs
FOR J OAN E. BRISTOL

There is movement in the air.
A clash and bang of particles.
Static change.
Slowly, so subtle.
It evolves
leaves us breathless
reaching out to read it
like Braille.
while you may see change
you cannot touch movement.
The heat is too much.
It sears the hand, we question.
Frowning in worry or laughing slyly
as if we knew all along
the destination.
Still, it's not the location, the outcome,
the place we arrive at that make up
who we are, where we are
where we've been.
The passion is in spinning
the dancing,
the pieces and
rebounding
silently.
The thrill is the embrace of change.
It is breath taking.

Oni Pendarvis, SAS '97

Next Time

Like newlyweds on a honeymoon,
We lost track
of time
and place.

Your sensuous lips kiss me all over,
and your baby soft hands caress me,
like a second skin.
Softly whispering in my ear,
“Can I make love to you?”

And I gently run my nails
up and down your back,
just the way you like it,
laying together
looking deep into each others’
soul...
I know what you
think,
feel,
want,
need.

Waking up the next morning
to still find you next to me.
No, you haven’t left.
And as you sleep,
you still hold on,
for comfort,
for protection,
for...

Alba N. Negron, SAS ‘99

The Dance

To whom it might concern
I am guarding fields as fires burn
And I am chasing flagging melodies
That sweep my brim of memories
Whose trembling clouds are weeping
rain
That purify my quartered brain
Do not trick the hand which strikes the
chime
But celebrate my bizarre rhyme
For daisies dance in passing wind
On pure green blades that never end
And simple fairies while creeping round
Do titter to my happy sound
'Tis a joyous day for all who live
Not caring to whom or what they give
A splendid display as I exit the scene
No sorrow felt nor word obscene
And bliss I feel while kisses sweet
Do swoon before my airy feet

Naomi Pace, SAS '99

Things Never Seen

Perhaps if I don't send you this poem,
you will imagine a Great rhyming pattern
with inherent music of angels.
And sentiments of such moving matters,
all the more touching because they were too
precious for any other eyes to read.

Like lovers who die after exchanging vows,
their love is all the more perfect.
Ignoring those tiresome workdays,
boring family visits, awkward pauses
and moments of uncertainty.

For every container of ink spilled,
or broken violin upon the stairs,
or love letter never sent
a heart beats with relief
and cries not for the tragedy of loss,
but for the very poignancy
of a cherished intention
not communicated.

Tammy Rose, SAS '97



Untitled, Beth Benson, SAS '99

Dancing to Your Rhythm

We stand and stare,
for time has stopped,
and we are the only ones
left in existence.

Your eyes look at me with a burning intensity.
Passion fills the room and engulfs us-
the thick, black smoke
of the fire of infatuation.

Slowly you undress me,
revealing the soft flesh you so desire.
Your gentle lips brush my body
like a warm summer breeze.

Skin to skin,
we embrace to become
one,
yet keeping our own identities,
as I dance to your rhythm;
making love while we hear
the tapping of the rain on the window.

Alba N. Negron, SAS '99



Untitled, Beth Benson, SAS '99

Stormy's

A stale cigarette burns itself out in a nearby ashtray. The aroma of orange scented candles float about the room. The dim lights here shadow everyone's melancholy face as they quench their thirsts with a beer. In the distance, a cracking of pool balls is heard. The rumble of voices rise as more people file into the room. Overheard by all is the only soothing songs sang by the juke box. All is well and this is what is called "Stormy's."

Benedetta Serraino, SAS '00

CLOSURE



Werewolf, Keish Smith, SAS '00

Hope

-Dedicated to my Uncle, Anthony Moran, who died of AIDS
on February 23, 1996

Pain and agony is your suffering.
Never knowing when or where you'll fall;
prolonging the inevitable
So you'll make right what you did wrong,
and hope all is forgiven.

Hope...
Funny word.
There's no hope for what you go through
at least not yet.

Hope...
You're in a good place now.
Holding on to see her one last time.
Your sister?
She's hanging in there.

Hope...
You are forgiven but never forgotten.

Alba N. Negron, SAS '99

“Untitled”

...Here I will end
The pain that I'm bearing
And in my new world
My life will be happy
There was a time when
I could hear birds sing
A time when children's laughter
Would make my heart joyful
But its' this heart whose
Only gift from me
Would be a sharpened knife
So that tears wouldn't be
In my eyes
But sometimes I wonder,
I wonder if my heart will
Ever change
Maybe it just needs to die
So that it can grow again

...Here I will end
The pain that I'm bearing
Maybe I still will cry
But soon the day will come
When the birds will sing again
And the pain will be over

Patricia Bernard, SAS '00

An Old Woman Waiting for Death

Staggering against the misty afternoon
she seeks shelter for her weary flesh
she is led by the pulsating propaganda of lush gardens
and of other visions of Eden
but for now...she waits

Guarded promises from the angels
embrace her wishes and carry them
on their wings into the heavens
reflecting sunlight

Ageless mind trapped in a withering figure
she was once deemed exquisite...everything perfect
except she was being robbed of her possession of beauty
as the years glided by

Being on God's leash
wanting to be released from her walk
...she waits

Friends long gone
beating her to the punch line of life
giggle and point their crumbling fingers at her
from their beds of earth
and she will eventually join them
only to taunt others while swinging from
Adam's missing rib.

Paula Pryce, Graduate '97

The Encounter

Frail, wrinkled and tired he lay there in an overly large bed which emphasized his frailty even more. So motionless was he that an onlooker would have readily assumed that he had passed on from this dear life. He wore a striped gown, shroud-like in appearance with only his exposed hands and feet as evidence of his obvious thinness. One can see, on close examination his chest heaving, slowly and insignificantly, as though he would breathe his last breath some time soon. His eyes were closed and appeared as two gray slits in his dark face, a face which looked full, perhaps swollen, and did not match his extremities. Except for a slight occasional twitching of his right temple and a peculiar flaring of his nostrils, the caretaker, Mazie, presumed that he was not cognizant of his surroundings. She walked into his room with a steaming cup of broth.

"Come Spencer, are you going to drink some broth today or not?" There was no response.

"Spencer! Are you still with us?" She asked as she flopped herself down in a chair at his bed-side, while resting the tray on his bed-side table. Spencer kept his eyes closed but parted his lips slightly as the warm broth touched his lips. He drank with unusual strength until he could hear the spoon scraping the cup's bottom. Even Mazie found this to be unusual for he had always only taken a few sips at a time.

"This must be your last meal, Spencer- perhaps this is a sign." She muttered to herself.

"A sign of what?" He thought. "I'm not going anywhere, Mazie, at least not yet." He had developed a determination to see his new friend again. She was a young girl whom he had seen for a brief moment. She appeared to be in her early teenage years. She wore a long white gown and moved quickly into the room, looked at him and smiled, and in a split second she was out again. It was that smile that he could not forget, that smile that he must see again, it was that smile that kept him alive. Through the slit of an eye, he saw Mazie sitting in a corner reading.

"Why doesn't she leave me alone with my thoughts?"

But Mazie was determined to see him breathe his last breath. She kept making occasional glances at him, and from time to time, if he tried to shift his position even insignificantly, she would go over to his bedside and look at him long and strange. Suddenly, she turned her book face down and left the room.

"Thank goodness." He said, "I believe nature called." He closed his eyes and tried to sleep. He felt himself sinking, deeper and deeper into oblivion, when sure enough his young friend entered his room again. At last he was able to get a good look of her. She was not smiling then, but her face conveyed a certain radiance. Her eyes were large and dark, and she looked at him with tender awesomeness. Her slender body moved around the room inquisitively. He could feel beads of sweat emanating from his forehead and running down his temples. She mopped his brow and whispered the word, "Papa."

"Papa." He thought, did he know this girl with the angelic face? Her touch was so comforting. He thought long and hard. Where did he know her from? Or did he in fact know her at all?

"What's your name?" He mumbled

"Michelle, my name is Michelle." She whispered.

"Michelle." He murmured, trying hard to evoke some memory of her name, but it was in vain. He stretched out his arms. He wanted to hold and protect her. She looked so fragile and he wanted no harm to come to her.

"Michelle!" He said as he encircled his arms around her. Now she was safe.

"Spencer!" Exclaimed Mazie, "Michelle, your daughter, died many years ago." He opened his eyes and looked into the sullen eyes of Mazie. He released his grasp spontaneously.

Judith Sambury Edwards, SON '97



Untitled, Beth Benson, SAS '99

Suicide Fire

Fire dancing on a slate of black

Swirling front and back

Vision of the sea

But I think I am still me

My heart is filled with flames

Dancing underworld it blames

There is a field

That appealed to me

Jumping and rolling

I see the black, orange, and yellow tolling

I see the anger

I see the stress

Maybe the sight of suicide

With the swallowing of pesticide

Needing to be repressed

Floating down the non-filtered blood

Mixing together like the gushing mud

I awake with the feeling of a burning sensation

Donna Bonacum, SAS '00

Wisdom Beyond My Time

Grandma I remember:
I remember the pigs in the blanket
 Pepridge Farm cookies
Money slipped in my coat pocket
 I remember, do you?

95- confined to bed or wheelchair
Legs don't work, Countless wrinkles
Cheeks sunken in, Dentures thrown out

Disoriented- 1945 or 1997?
 In and out flashes
Memories of days long gone
Doesn't want to live in the now
 I don't blame you

You may fool them
 But I know you
The sadness and loneliness
Cannot be hidden from your eyes

As I saw you clutch on to that
 Little doll
I knew how much you needed
 To be wanted and loved

We haven't forgotten
Decisions had to be made
 Inevitable I suppose-
 Growing old, Aging
 I stared so frightened
At what may be me in years to come
 That will not be me I won't let it

Nicole Casten, SON '99



Untitled. Meghan Gilroy, SAS '97

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of the talent and skill
that defines fine art.*



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